

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dillon Elementary School District #10

225 E. Reeder

Dillon, MT 59725

406-688-4311

EXHIBIT

DATE

HB

10
Jan 13, 2011
15

1/6/2011

ATTN: Montana Legislative Long Range Planning Sub-committee

RE: Support for the Montana Quality Schools Grant Program

Sub-committee Members:

Dillon Elementary School District #10 has benefitted greatly from the Montana Quality Schools Grant Program and we hope that you will give your utmost consideration to extending the program into the future. The funding that we have received from the program has allowed us to better serve the needs of our students and to use money intended for the classroom to stay in those classroom.

Dillon Elementary Schools was very fortunate to receive a Quick Start Grant in 2009 that allowed us to replace our middle school boiler which had "given up the ghost." Such a replacement had not been budgeted for by my predecessor and had it not been for the Quality Schools grant, money intended for instruction would have had to be diverted to replace this boiler. School District #10 has also received an investment grade energy audit through Quality Schools as well as a School Planning Grant, both of which were instrumental in providing key information necessary for our recent successful passage of a school construction levy.

I can say without a doubt that the Quality Schools Grant Program has enhanced the educational opportunities for the children of Dillon and of Montana. I implore the committee to see the merit in this program and to do all that it can to make sure that the program is funded in the future. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Glen A. Johnson, Ed. D.



North Star Public School

www.northstar.k12.mt.us

High School
406-355-4481 Phone
406-355-4532 Fax

Elementary School
406-376-3183 Phone
406-376-3197 Fax

PO Box 129, 105 3rd Ave NE

PO Box 250, 205 3rd Street E

January 5, 2011

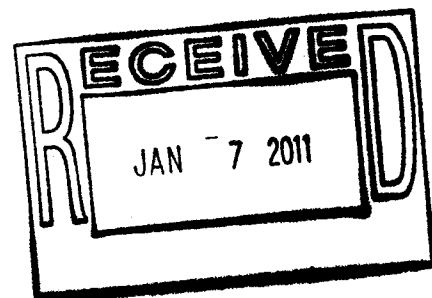
To: Kali Wicks, Program Manager

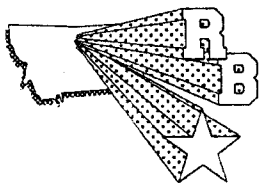
From: Ken Halverson, Supt. *KH*

Re: Impact of Grant Funding for Public Schools

We are one of the fortunate school districts who are to receive grant monies in this year's Quality Schools Grant Program once it receives legislative approval. As Superintendent of a small school system, I can vouch for the fact that these dollars are absolutely critical in our effort to maintain a necessary level of safety for all who enter our aging school facilities. Upon completion of a "Needs Assessment", we were dejected to learn that the cost of updating and installing a multi-dimensional fire alarm system throughout our district will entail an expenditure of \$123,386. Without a doubt, that level of funding is well beyond reasonable for our patrons since we may have no choice but to run a levy this spring just to maintain our current year's budget in the coming year.

Thanks to the diligence of a few and with additional advice from folks at the Dept. of Commerce, our district is on the short list of school districts receiving funding to purchase and install a smoke/heat detection system in each of our district sites. I would note that we currently have multiple classrooms without a functional alarm system that has raised the concern of the State Fire Marshall, and likely was one of the factors in our district being awarded monies at this time





Rocky Boy Schools

School Districts 87J&L
81 Mission Taylor Road
Box Elder, MT 59521

"Home of the Stars"
★ Northern Stars ★
★ Morning Stars ★

January 11, 2011

Long-Range Planning Subcommittee

Chair: Rep. Walter McNutt (R-Sidney)

Vice Chair: Sen. Taylor Brown (R-Huntley)

Rep. Rob Cook (R-Conrad)

Rep. Ron Ehli (R-Hamilton)

Rep. Bill McChesney (D-Miles City)

Rep. Jon Sesso (D-Butte)

Sen. Jon Sonju (R-Kalispell)

Sen. Carol Williams (D-Missoula)

Honorable LRP Subcommittee Members:

I write this **Letter of Support** seeking positive consideration for this subcommittee's continued backing and on-going recommendations for sustained funding of the Quality Schools Grant Program [formerly HB 152, now HB 15], which has proven to show the extreme and dire need across the state of Montana. During the last biennium, thirty-three schools were direct beneficiaries of this program, ranging from the largest urban schools to the smallest, rural schools. Our District was one of many which were not fortunate enough to secure funding through this program, although our need remains a high priority.

This program is focused at providing monetary assistance to improve school facilities and enhance student learning by providing "grants to public school districts for school facility projects". Montana schools continue to face many fiscal obstacles as we continue to attempt to prioritize the safety and well-being of students. Too often our schools must put fiscal focus on personnel and program decisions and continue to find ways to "band-aid" our facilities. The gauze, cotton, and tape have come to the end of its usefulness.

If HB 15 remains funded, our District would be a beneficiary of the Quality Schools Grant Program in the next biennium.

Challenges that Rocky Boy Public Schools face:

- We are unable to raise and sell bond initiatives within our school districts due to a strong federal presence [Indian reservation] associated with the land.
- The taxable valuation of the districts is extremely low, due to the federal trust lands.
- There is no local tax base to generate a variety of "bond revenues", although there are three (3) primary tax payers on the reservation (local utility companies & communication towers). If we were to pass huge tax increases onto these few

"The Mission of Rocky Boy Schools is to guide all students toward successful achievement of high quality standards in their education and in life."

Phone
(406) 395-4291

FAX
(406) 395-4829

Head Start
(406) 395-4640

taxpayers, they in turn would pass the increases on to our local consumers via increased rate hikes in utility services and fees.

- If and when the severely limited construction funds are allocated from the federal Impact Aid Program [usually every other year] to address school facilities, these limited monies grossly underfund anything but the basic, annual maintenance activities [supplies, building repair & maintenance, propane, electricity].
- The current backup generator installed with the building in 1988 cannot support the electrical systems within the 7-12 buildings and fails each time it is needed.
- Our heating, water and vacuum sewage disposal systems are run exclusively by electricity; when the power is interrupted, heat, water and sewage issues pose a serious health threat to approximately 300 students and staff.
- Missed academic/school time results from electrical issues.
- A highly irregular power supply causes frequent, unannounced electrical "brown and black outs", especially on weekends which damages or destroys equipment [surge protectors, projectors, & computers].

How the Quality Schools Grant Program will benefit Rocky Boy Public Schools:

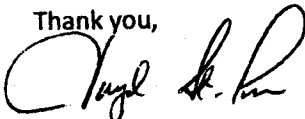
- Monetary support to upgrade and complete a much needed emergency power supply to our jr. and sr. high school buildings, which have a direct impact on heating, water, and septic systems.
- Allow us to focus our limited fiscal resources on other safety issues and energy efficiency projects within the two districts.

Our experiences in working with the Quality School Grant Program Staff:

- Very knowledgeable, helpful, and reliable.
- Communicate and disseminate program information readily to all Montana schools.
- Provide insight and answer a myriad of questions regarding the Quality Schools Grant Program.

In summary, HB 152 did exactly what it was intended to address. Thirty-three Montana schools were able to utilize \$10,607,964 for school facility projects, which would not have been possible without the Quality Schools Grant Program. Looking to our southern border, a neighboring state has placed a heavy emphasis on school construction and facilities. HB 15 keeps Montana on the right track. I would urge your continued support and recommendation for funding of the Quality Schools Grant Program [HB 15].

Thank you,



Voyd St. Pierre
Superintendent

SuperintendentPhone 406-768-3409
Fax 406-768-5510**Elementary Principal**

Phone 406-768-5601

High School Principal

Phone 406-768-5603

Middle School Principal

Phone 406-768-5602

Poplar Public Schools

Box 458

Poplar, Montana 59255

January 11, 2011

Kali Wicks, Program Manager
Quality Schools Grant Program
Montana Department of Commerce
PO Box 200549
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Ms. Wicks:

On behalf of Poplar Public Schools, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for the Quick Start Audit, Quick Start Project, Quality Schools Planning Grant, and Quality Schools Project Grant that we have had the opportunity to be involved with.

The Poplar Public Schools received the following grants:

Quick Start Audit: This audit provided the Poplar School District with ways to reduce utility costs associated with the heating and cooling functions of the Elementary, Middle School, and High School.

Quick Start Energy Grant: This energy grant allowed the Poplar School District retrofit lights in classrooms, gymnasiums, and offices. Through the retrofitting of the lights we were able to reduce our utility bills significantly.

Quality Schools Planning Grant: This planning grant provided the Poplar School District the opportunity to collaborate with an architect firm in developing a master plan that prioritized our facility needs.

Quality Schools Project Grant: This grant allowed the Poplar School District to repair the elementary sewer system.

Without the quick start audit and energy grant the Poplar School District would not have had the resources to conduct an energy audit and reduce energy costs. Without the quality schools planning and project grants the Poplar School District would not have had the resources to develop a master facility needs plan and correct a serious elementary sewer issue.

The staff at the Montana Department of Commerce Quality Schools Grant Program were helpful, courteous, and supportive as we worked with them in applying for and administering the grants. I whole heartedly give my support to the Quality Schools Grant Program and am grateful for the grants we received that helped the Poplar School District address both energy and facility use issues.

Sincerely,



Charles Cook
Superintendent

Equal Opportunity Employer

**Whitefish School District 44**

600 EAST SECOND STREET, Whitefish, MT 59937

DISTRICT OFFICE • (406) 862-8640

January 13, 2010

RE: Quality Schools Grant Program

Mr. Chairman, members of the Joint House and Senate subcommittee for Long-Range Planning:

I am Jerry House, Superintendent of the Whitefish School District. I am here this morning asking for your support for HB 15 and the 30 applicants awaiting your decision for financial support. Our school system can testify to the impact of Quality Schools grant funds for both short term and hopefully, long term planning needs.

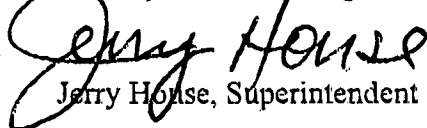
Short term...Whitefish Schools has received infrastructure grant funding for high school and elementary energy and lighting retrofits. The energy savings has been tremendous...233,456 Kwh's which amounts to 45% reduction in savings at the high school and another 63,220 Kwh's resulting in a 123% savings in our elementary facility. We have worked closely with Flathead Electric Company (FEC) to receive rebates as designed by our energy consultants. Without such a program, these two projects would be almost impossible to obtain in today's budgets.

This morning, you are hearing testimony for supporting HB15 applicants to complete long range planning projects that have a direct effect upon student learning and achievement. Whitefish School District is in the long range planning process to renovate a high school facility that does not meet several modern day codes...electrical, fire, plumbing, HVAC.

With the approval of the Quality Schools grant, we are approaching our public with a necessary bond measure to improve our high school. In today's economy, we need to demonstrate sound fiscal practices and be accountable for our actions. The corner stone of those efforts is our application and approval for HB15 funding.

I encourage you to approve grants that truly make a difference for public education and the children we serve. Our Phase 1 redevelopment of WHS campus is such a grant.

Thank you for allowing me time this morning.


Jerry House, SuperintendentEnclosed: Director of Maintenance Summary
Ron ThompsonMuldown Elementary School - (406) 862-8620 • Whitefish Middle School - (406) 862-8650
Whitefish High School - (406) 862-8600 • Special Services - (406) 862-8655

January 7, 2011

Jerry House

Superintendent

Jerry,

Whitefish School District received \$85,487.16 for the High School and \$138,438.23 for the Elementary Schools from the Quality Schools Facility Grant Program. The following is a breakdown of how the money was used.

School	Project	Cost	Estimated Energy Savings	Reduction
High School	Lighting Retrofit	\$139,900.	233,456 Kwh annually	45%
Elementary	Lighting Retrofit	\$44,053.34	63,220 Kwh	123%
MS Gym heat	Digital Controls	\$53,465.00	26,000 Kwh	_____
Middle School	AC for Computer Labs	\$67,358.46	None	_____
<u>Total</u>	High School	\$139,900	233,456 Kwh	

Rebate (FEC)

\$53,054

\$86,846.

Elementary	\$164,876.80	89,220 Kwh
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Rebate (FEC)

\$15,912.

\$148,964.80

Ron Thompson



Winifred Public Schools



Superintendent
(406) 462-5349
District Clerk
(406) 462-5420

Home of the Red Raiders

School Office
(406) 462-5420
School Fax
(406) 462-5477

School District #115 500 Main Street P.O. Box 109 Winifred, MT 59489

1/11/2011

Dear Legislative Subcommittee Members,

Please consider my letter in support for the continued funding as proposed in HB15. During the past year, Winifred School was fortunate enough to receive a grant funds through the Department of Commerce for a much needed roof repair.

For several years prior to my arrival to Winifred School as the administrator, a roof leak over the gymnasium began. Money was always an issue when discussing a solution to this specific problem. However, with the aid of the Quality Schools Grant, we were able to remove the old roofing fabric and apply a new roofing material that has subsequently solved the leaking problem. We were also able to stop the mold issue that was beginning to develop.

Kali Wicks and other staff in the department were very helpful throughout the entire process and always willing to assist and answer any questions that arose during the construction.

I appreciate your time and effort in considering this important funding legislation for Montana Schools.

Sincerely,

Dustin B. Sturm
Winifred School Superintendent

January 05, 2011

Ms. Kali Wicks
Quality Schools Grant Program
Montana Department of Commerce
PO Box 200549
Helena, MT 59620

RE: Support of House Bill (HB) 15

Dear Kali:

This letter is in support of HB 15 for funding assistance for public school projects through the Quality Schools Facility Grant Program. Benefits realized through the Quality Schools Grant Program include:

- Improvements to schools that will reduce energy consumption in schools by up to 25%;
- Work completed will increase student comfort levels and provide for an atmosphere more conducive to learning (e.g., higher "No Child Left Behind" math test scores); and
- Engineering work sufficient to retain five (5) employees during 2009 and 2010.

It pleases this native Montanan to see improvements being made to the infrastructure of Montana's education system. The dollars are well-spent and needed to maintain the valuable assets represented by our schools. Thank you Kali and the Commerce Staff for the outstanding job done to effect this program! If you have any questions regarding this letter of support, direct them to me in the Missoula office.

Sincerely,



C. Ray Windmueller
Project Engineer / Manager
WTR Consulting Engineers, Missoula

January 6, 2010

Subject: Work Generated from Quality School Grant Program

To Whom It May Concern:

WTR has benefited greatly from the Quality School Grant Program. A summary of the projects completed by WTR through the different Quality School Grant Programs is described below.

The Quick Start Energy Audits provided WTR an estimated 70 Energy Audits totaling \$544,000.00 of work. This work occurred over a four month period supplying 11 employees with many billable hours of work.

The Deferred Maintenance Grant brought a Commissioning project to WTR with Denton School. This project totaled an estimated \$12,500.00. WTR provided assistance with Denton School's boiler which included troubleshooting all problems and making corrections for the boiler to run more efficiently. WTR also developed an Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Manual to assist with any problems or questions the School may have in the future.

The Quality Schools Grant Program has brought some great projects to the office of WTR including three projects which are currently either in the design phase or are under construction. These projects total about \$828,000.00. The 2013 Biennium of Grants will be a GREAT benefit to WTR who has been able to assist so many Schools. WTR has assisted five Schools whose projects have been approved. If the Legislature approves the list of approved projects presented by the Department of Commerce an additional \$723,000.00 of projects will be completed through WTR.

The Quality Schools Grant Program is a great program for the Schools throughout the state of Montana to provide improvements to the Schools. The program is also a great source for engineering and architecture firms to provide work for their employees. A countless number of contractors around the state have also benefited from the work provided from this Grant program. Providing employment is a top priority of many Montanans thus, making the Quality Schools Grant Program very valuable.

WTR has greatly appreciated programs such as the Quality Schools Program and hopes to see it continue in the future. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at (406) 441-4000.

Respectfully Submitted,
WTR Consulting Engineers, LLC

Pat Sampson
Staff Engineer

Matt J Warner, PE – Principal / Owner
WTR Consulting Engineers & Everson Cordeiro Engineering
204 E Lyndale
Helena, MT 59601
406.441.4000
mwarner@wtrconsulting.com



WTR provides engineering and construction in Mechanical, Electrical, and Environmental industries. WTR has been in business since 1993 has 3 offices located in Helena, Missoula and Great Falls, Montana. Mr. Warner is a native Montanan who grew up in Forsyth, Montana.



Members of the Legislature:

The ongoing support House Bill (HB) 15 for construction energy Bills will reduce overall energy costs in schools and maintain and provide new jobs.

In 2009 WTR competed over 70 energy audits in many school districts throughout Montana, myself and my engineers saw first hand the condition some of the schools are in. The school buildings are in such poor shape for energy reduction, an engineer can walk into a school and within 30 minutes save the school \$10,000 a year by pointing out inefficiencies of the heating and ventilation system.

With more time and a little engineering, the schools can save \$25,000 to \$50,000 A YEAR from that point forward.

In 2 years a school would save \$50,000 to \$100,000 a year, there are several hundred school buildings that are in this category.

Through the design and construction of the projects we have employed 11 engineers related to this work.

From the Quick Start Grants and Quality Schools Grant Program from the Department of Commerce.

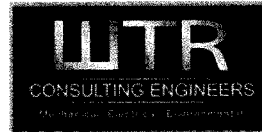
- In 2009 and 2010 -- 278 Jobs were created or retained with this Program that was created by 2009 Legislative Session and an estimated yearly energy savings nearly 1.2 Million Dollars.
- That is 1.2 Million Dollars that the Schools will not have to pay in energy costs.
- 364 jobs were created or retained through Deferred Maintenance and Energy Efficiency Projects.
- The 2011 Quality Schools Grant Program awarded school grants for safety and health, Building Code items, specific services related to the requirements of the accreditation standards, long-term cost-effective benefits to school facilities including technology, enhance educational opportunities for students and Energy Improvements.
- The 3.8 Million Dollars that will be awarded for energy construction projects, the estimated yearly savings from the projects are nearly \$200,000. (\$189,502.00.).

WTR has 3 projects which are currently either in the design phase or are under construction. These projects total about \$828,000.00. These projects will employ 2 engineers and 20-25 construction personnel.

A countless number of contractors around the State have benefited from the work provided from this Grant program. Providing employment is a top priority for many Montanans thus, making the Quality Schools Grant Program very valuable.

I want to acknowledge the hard work that Dept of Commerce has done through these many energy saving construction projects and also recognize Montana Department of Environmental Quality energy program. In the 61st legislative session money was appropriated for energy construction projects. Speaking with several of my clients yesterday who have had the energy construction project implemented, they are very, very appreciative for these grants and the money that is coming out of the legislature.

Matt J Warner, PE – Principal / Owner
WTR Consulting Engineers & Everson Cordeiro Engineering
204 E Lyndale
Helena, MT 59601
406.441.4000
mwarner@wtrconsulting.com



WTR provides engineering and construction in Mechanical, Electrical, and Environmental industries. WTR has been in business since 1993 has 3 offices located in Helena, Missoula and Great Falls, Montana. Mr. Warner is a native Montanan who grew up in Forsyth, Montana.

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There is also Another Source of Funding for construction projects and it is called TSEP

Treasure State Endowment Program is Vital to Montana...

TSEP was created by Montana's voters with the passage of Legislative Referendum 110 on June 2, 1992 to fund infrastructure projects such as water, sewer, solid waste and bridges.

Funded by coal tax revenues, this program has an outstanding record of success and it's safe to say that almost all Montanans have been positively impacted.

TSEP means jobs: The diversion of TSEP funds would result in the loss approximately 1,000 Montana jobs in construction, engineering, and related jobs providing materials, fuel, rentals, lodging, meals, etc.

TSEP projects submitted for funding to the 2009 Legislature had a funding leverage of four to one. That ratio means the \$18.5 million in TSEP funds is matched with other funding sources to produce \$92.5 million in engineering and construction.

TSEP funds critical infrastructure: The highest priority for grant application ranking is for projects that solve urgent and serious public health or safety problems.

TSEP means lower fees and taxes: A review of the 2009 projects requesting TSEP funding revealed that water and sewer rates averaged an already affordable \$72/month with TSEP funding and \$97/month without TSEP funding.

TSEP boosts long-term economic development: Infrastructure is the foundation of economic development and our quality of life. By ignoring our leaking pipes, failing wastewater systems and unsafe bridges we are discouraging economic growth.

For this legislative session, communities across Montana are counting on TSEP to help them afford projects that are critical to public health and safety.

Accordingly, we strongly urge the Governor and our state legislators to maintain the Quality Schools Grant Program and the TSEP funding.

Without the Quality Schools Grant Program and TSEP funding, there would be many more unemployed engineers and construction workers.